

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 199124 TOSEC 090045
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UNCLAS STATE 199124 TOSEC 090045

FOLLOWING REPEAT PRETORIA 4246 ACTION STATE INFO BONN LAGOS
LONDON PARIS USUN AUG 22.

QUOTE UNCLAS PRETORIA 4246

LAGOS FOR MOOSE AND YOUNG

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PARM, SF

SUBJECT: FONMIN BOTHA COMMENTS ON NUCLEAR ISSUE

REF: STATE 196580

1. FOLLOWING ITEM WAS CARRIED ON SABC NEWS THIS MORNING:
QUOTE THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS MR. R.F. BOTHA
HAS CONFIRMED IN AN INTERVIEW WITH SAPA THAT THE
GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES HAS MADE INQUIRIES ABOUT
THE TRUTH OF RUMORS SPREAD BY RUSSIA THROUGHOUT THE WORLD
TO THE EFFECT THAT SOUTH AFRICA IS ON THE POINT OF TESTING
A NUCLEAR WEAPON OR DEVICE. MR. BOTHA SYAS THAT THE
AMERICAN AMBASSADOR IN SOUTH AFRICA HAS BEEN TOLD THAT THE
RUMORS ARE WHOLLY AND TOTALLY UNFOUNDED. HE SAYS THE
MATTER WAS ALSO RAISED BY THE WEST GERMAN FOREIGN MINISTER
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PAGE 02 STATE 199124 TOSEC 090045

MR. GENSCHER DURING TALKS HE HAD WITH HIM IN FRANKFURT
LAST WEEK. OTHER GOVERNMENTS HAVE ALSO APPROACHED
SOUTH AFRICA ABOUT THE ALLEGATIONS. MR. BOTHA SAYS
IT'S NO NEW STORY. THESE RUMORS HAVE BEEN SPREAD FOR
YEARS. ALL THAT IS NEW IS THAT THE RUSSIANS ARE WHIPPING
UP EMOTIONS FOR THE UNITED NATIONS ANTI-APARTHEID
CONFERENCE IN LAGOS THIS WEEK. MR. BOTHA SAYS THERE IS

ANOTHER REASON FOR THE RUSSIAN PROPAGANDA. HE WAS RECENTLY TOLD BY A REPRESENTATIVE OF AN AMERICAN COUNTRY THAT THE RUSSIANS WOULD ENGAGE IN THIS KIND OF CAMOUFLAGE IN ORDER TO HIDE THEIR OWN AGGRESSION IN AFRICA. APPARENTLY THE RUSSIANS HAD DECIDED TO CONSOLIDATE THEIR POSITION IN AFRICA BY TAKING THE LEAD AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA AT THE LAGOS CONFERENCE. IN THE INTERVIEW MR. BOTHA ALSO REFERRED TO THE CYNICISM OF THE RUSSIANS WHICH HE SAID WAS APPARENT BY THE FACT THAT BETTER THAN TWO MONTHS AGO THE SOVIET UNION HAD AGITATED STRONGLY TO HAVE SOUTH AFRICA REMOVED FROM THE CONTROLLING BODY OF THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY BECAUSE OF THE ALLEGED INADEQUACY OF HER TECHNOLOGY. NOW SOUTH AFRICA WAS ACCUSED OF HANING ADVANCED SO MUCH THAT SHE STOOD ON THE POINT OF MANUFACTURING AN ATOM BOMB. UNQUOTE

2. DEPT PLEASE PASS SECRETARY'S PARTY. BOWDLER UNQUOTE
CHRISTOPHER

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